
UN/POP/MIG/2002/15

8 July 2002

ENGLISH ONLY

COORDINATION MEETING ON INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION

Population Division

Department of Economic and Social Affairs

United Nations Secretariat

New York, 11-12 July 2002

SOCIAL COHESION: MIGRATION DATA COLLECTION *

Secretariats to the European Committee on Migration
and the European Population Committee
Council of Europe Directorate General III **

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**COUNCIL OF EUROPE DIRECTORATE GENERAL III – SOCIAL
COHESION: MIGRATION DATA COLLECTION**

**Paper prepared by the secretariats to the European Committee on Migration
and the European Population Committee – Council of Europe Directorate
General III (DG III) Social Cohesion**

Type of Data relating to international migration routinely collected and compiled by the Council of Europe

The Council of Europe is an active partner together with EUROSTAT and the UN in the “Joint data collection programme”. This programme consists of two separate and independent programmes: 1) Demographic data and 2) Migration data. The participating organizations have equal access to the collected data.

Hitherto, the Council of Europe has been a passive partner in the joint collection of migration data. However, the European Migration Committee (CDMG) and the European Population Committee (CAHP) are currently exploring the possibility of becoming active in using the Joint migration questionnaire, and thereby being in a position to collect and compile data for the ten European countries falling under the Council of Europe’s responsibility. If the feasibility study gives a positive result this work will commence in 2003. The data that would be collected is outlined in Table 1.

Table 1 Data requested in the 2001 joint migration data collection

Definitions	Explanation of main definitions used for the statistics supplied
Table 1	Major categories inflows and outflows
Table 2	Long-term immigration by country of last residence and sex
Table 3a	Long-term immigration by citizenship and age –Both sexes
Table 3b	Long-term immigration by citizenship and age –Males
Table 3c	Long-term immigration by citizenship and age –Females
Table 4	Long-term emigration by country of next residence and sex
Table 5a	Long-term emigration by citizenship and age –Both sexes
Table 5b	Long-term emigration by citizenship and age –Males
Table 5c	Long-term emigration by citizenship and age –Females
Table 6a	New asylum applications by citizenship and type of application
Table 6b	Asylum decisions and applications by citizenship and type
Table 7	Acquisition of citizenship
Table 8a	Population by citizenship and age on 1 January - Both sexes
Table 8b	Population by citizenship and age on 1 January - Males
Table 8c	Population by citizenship and age on 1 January - Females
Table 9	Population by country of birth and sex on 1 January
Table 10a	Workers by citizenship and age group on 1 January - Both sexes
Table 10b	Workers by citizenship and age group on 1 January - males
Table 10c	Workers by citizenship and age group on 1 January - Females
Table 11	Workers by economic activity, citizenship and sex on 1 January
Table 12	Workers by citizenship and region (NUTS II level) on 1 January
Table 13	Workers by economic activity, citizenship and region (NUTS II level) on 1 January
Table 14a	Main characteristics of the active population by citizenship and age group on 1 January - Both sexes
Table 14b	Main characteristics of the active population by citizenship and age group on 1 January - Males
Table 14c	Main characteristics of the active population by citizenship and age group on 1 January - Females

Although the Council of Europe has been a passive participant in the Joint migration questionnaire it has collected some data on migration under the supervision and request of the European population committee. Data has been collected for two variables – International migration by country and country of origin and Population of foreign citizenship by country and citizenship. This data is collected by the Secretariat ad-hoc to the Joint migration questionnaire, and the information is included in the Committee’s demographic yearbook – “Recent demographic developments in Europe”.

In addition, the European committee for migration compiles information from secondary sources for use in publications and meeting reports. The Committee annually commissions a consultant report called “Current trends in international migration in Europe”. This volume makes use of data from a variety of sources such as EUROSTAT, UN, ILO and the Council of Europe.

Use of Migration Data - Current activities in DG III

As mentioned, DG III is currently providing and analysing migration data in two publications under the responsibility of the two committees mentioned above. The information is destined for policy makers affiliated to the two committees as well as representatives of other Council of Europe structures, to be used as an input on migration trends in their work on promoting social cohesion in Europe.

The two committees recognize that the information has a public and academic value as well, and both annual reports are made available on our website free of charge (http://www.coe.int/T/E/Social_Cohesion/Population/). Furthermore, the European Population Committee offers the data it collects to the general public in table format (via the internet) with a view to promoting further use of the data. Both committees intend to continue promoting free access to the data if the collection is widened as described above.

If the two committees proceed and expand their migration data collection it is likely that the current publications will be reformed. Both committees have vested interests in the project – the migration committee because it gives them the means and information background to address some of the more important problems relating to migration, and the population committee because migration data is at the same time demographic data, and not a negligible part of the CAHP’s research over the last years have made use of migration data in one way or another.

The current proposal suggests expanding the migration committee’s yearly publication on migration trends and turning it into something similar to the population committee’s “Recent demographic developments in Europe”. Care would be taken to conserve the qualitative analysis in the current report on migration trends, but at the same time the new publication would provide country specific data in a much more systematic way than has been done so far. Such a publication would offer a useful input to work on migration issues in both committees. It is also likely to attract the interest of, for example, the Council of Europe’s Parliamentary Assembly and become a media attraction in a similar way as the Demographic yearbook.

Difficulties in gathering migration information.

The inherent difficulties in any project concerned with migration data collection is the accessibility of reliable data, and the large non-response rate concerning some or all the tables that are requested. The European population committee is, however, relatively successful and the response rate is currently over 60%. Non-response rate is primarily due to the fact that the country does not collect the requested data themselves, thus clearly indicating lack of harmonized international data in this field. However, there is an increased demand for this kind of data on behalf of politicians, committee members, journalists and the general public. It is also worth noticing that the Joint data collection is only just initialised, and we can expect that countries over time will become increasingly good in reporting this data.

Areas where the data collection efforts need to be strengthened

The two committees have identified two main areas that need to be strengthened. There is currently no reliable data on irregular migration at the international level. While this problem is easy to identify, there are currently no easy solutions available. Another field concerns migration data suitable for analysing integration. Most data today is collected using the concept of citizenship. Thus, when migrants become naturalised they often disappear from the statistics. Discussions held inside the two committees have emphasized the need for data including information on the country of birth. While this is not a perfect means to allow for analysis of integration, it is at least a first measure to enable some analysis of the integration of first generation migrants.